

6 FAH-5 H-200 ICASS STRUCTURE

6 FAH-5 H-210 BASIC ICASS DOCUMENTS

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)
(Office of Origin: RM/ICASS)

6 FAH-5 H-211 ICASS STANDARD CHARTER

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The text of the ICASS standard charter is in 6 FAH-5 Exhibit H-211 ICASS Standard Charter. This charter may not be amended at post.

6 FAH-5 H-211.1 What Is the ICASS Standard Charter?

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The ICASS standard charter establishes the ICASS council and cites chief of mission authorities. This charter establishes operating guidelines, including rules of procedure (the rules of consensus and delegations of responsibility by ICASS council members to their subordinates in operational matters), terms under which agencies can withdraw from services, and terms under which service providers can cease to provide stated services and frequency of meetings.

6 FAH-5 H-211.2 Chief of Mission

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

By signature, the chief of mission (COM) reaffirms his or her agreement with, and support of, the ICASS standard charter.

6 FAH-5 H-211.3 Signatures

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The agencies' senior representatives at post sign the ICASS standard charter. Representatives of new agencies sign the charter upon arrival at post.

6 FAH-5 H-211.4 Resource Commitments

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Resource commitments state that participating organizations have a direct commitment to provide funding resources.

6 FAH-5 H-212 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is signed by the Foreign Service post, ICASS council, and U.S. service provider. A sample MOU is found in 6 FAH-5 Exhibit H-212 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

6 FAH-5 H-212.1 What Are the Elements of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

- a. Elements of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) include:
 - (1) A cover document that establishes terms and conditions of the agreement between service provider(s) and customer agencies;
 - (2) A description of services offered in each cost center, standards for each service, and performance measures; and
 - (3) A subscription of services for each customer agency (see 6 FAH-5 Exhibit H-212.1 Subscription of Services). Modifications, if approved by the ICASS council, should be included here for each cost center.
- b. The MOU should be reviewed and signed annually. An agency signature constitutes agreement to all elements in the MOU.

6 FAH-5 H-212.2 Mission-Wide Priorities

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Since not every post will have the resources necessary to provide an unlimited range of service options, councils and service provider(s) should achieve a mutual understanding of mission-wide priorities; these priorities will then be reflected in the level of services offered. Defined priorities permit focused use of resources. For example, if there is general consensus that the quality of housing at a given post needs significant improvement and should become a mission-wide priority, the customer service standards and resulting cost-center budgets should reflect this. This means that standards set forth for a service of lesser priority may need to reflect smaller cost-center budgets. Clear communication between the council and service provider(s) is essential.

6 FAH-5 H-212.3 When to Review a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Package

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) package should be reviewed as early as possible in the third quarter of each fiscal year and be signed by all customer agencies by July 1. Additional agencies may subscribe to a service by mutual agreement with the service provider and the council at any time during the fiscal year.

6 FAH-5 H-212.4 Who Drafts the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Package?

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The council is responsible for ensuring that the memorandum of understanding (MOU) package is reviewed. Preparation is the responsibility of the service provider in consultation with the council.

6 FAH-5 H-212.5 Who Signs the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Package?

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The memorandum of understanding (MOU) package should be signed by a representative of each service provider and each customer agency. An

agency signature constitutes agreement to all elements in the MOU package. However, an agency signature does not constitute approval of the budget.

6 FAH-5 H-213 POST ICASS SERVICE STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

A major principle of ICASS is that users (the customers) set service standards mutually with the service provider and evaluate how well the service standards are met.

6 FAH-5 H-213.1 Purpose of Customer Service Standards

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

- a. Customer service standards are a key component of ICASS management at post. They are written for each task and cost center at post. Service standards define and establish service expectations, provide parameters of service, and provide the basis of evaluation and measurable results. Active and continuous application of performance measures such as metrics, surveys, and performance diagnostics are essential to monitoring and improving services in ICASS.
- b. Standards also serve to educate customers on resource requirements and other constraints in the provision of services. Since not every post will have the resources necessary to provide an unlimited range of service, the council and service provider(s) should achieve a mutual understanding of service priorities and reflect the same in the levels of service offered. For example, if there is general consensus that the quality of housing or improvements to safety issues at a given post need significant improvement and should become a mission priority, the customer service standards and resulting cost-center budgets should reflect the investment. This means that standards set forth for a service of lesser priority should reflect a smaller investment in cost-center budgets.

6 FAH-5 H-213.2 Executive Order 12862, Setting Customer Service Standards

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Executive Order 12862, Setting Customer Service Standards, directs that all executive departments and agencies which serve the public should:

- (1) Identify customers;
- (2) Survey customers to determine kind and quality of service;
- (3) Issue service standards and measure results against them;
- (4) Benchmark performance;
- (5) Survey employees to improve service;
- (6) Provide customers with choices in service;
- (7) Make information easily accessible; and
- (8) Address customer complaints.

6 FAH-5 H-213.3 Determining Standards

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The council and the service provider(s) are responsible for ensuring that acceptable standards are established and that these standards are used as the basis for evaluating performance. Standards are developed through a cooperative effort involving the provider, the individual customer, and the council or its working group. Standards should be considered as part of the council's resource decisions, with the understanding that changes in standards have resource implications. These standards will be used in the memorandum of understanding (MOU).

6 FAH-5 H-213.4 Reviewing Standards

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Standards should be reviewed at least annually. Standards can be changed during the year with the consent of both the council and the service provider. There should be a continuous attempt to improve standards as baselines are developed, and to reflect changing requirements.

6 FAH-5 H-213.5 Customer-Driven System

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

In the mission ICASS setting, your customers are your colleagues. ICASS service standards and performance measures are therefore developed and endorsed through mutual dialogue and an understanding of services and conditions. U.S. citizen employees, locally engaged staff, and customers should be invited to assist in the development of service standards and performance measures that reflect post conditions, objectives and priorities. In accordance with good business practice, ICASS managers and service providers should also:

- (1) **Know their customers.** Customers change frequently. ICASS managers and service providers should become acquainted with their customers promptly, give presentations at post orientation sessions, and maintain a matrix of customer names, affiliations, and enrollments;
- (2) **Ask customers and service providers for new ideas.** The best ideas often come from those who do the job or who have received similar services in another setting. Establish a systematic process for harvesting ideas and creating a culture for sharing knowledge;
- (3) **Engage all staff (U.S. citizen employees and locally employed staff) and customers in developing and accomplishing reasonable service standards and performance measures which are best suited to achieve post objectives.**
“Reasonable” means within the resources of the provider and within customer expectations. Standards are set and changed by mutual agreement as resources, priorities, and requirements change;
- (4) **Be committed to quality service and customer satisfaction. Communicate performance standards to all levels and all personnel providing service support.** Evaluate individual performance on the basis of those standards. Strive for excellence and always doing the job better. This must be a continuous process;
- (5) **Communicate with customers in a timely, clear, courteous, and accurate manner.** Schedule regular face-to-face communication with colleagues. Perform periodic surveys to assess performance and areas for attention; and
- (6) **Establish a mechanism for dealing with customer complaints.** This will provide the service provider and personnel with information for improving service over time.

6 FAH-5 H-213.6 Developing “SMART” Standards

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

- a. For standards to prove effective, they must be developed jointly by the provider and customer(s). It is essential that both **timeliness** and **quality** of service be considered. One without the other will rarely achieve the desired level of customer satisfaction. In addition, standards should be:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant/results oriented
Timely

- b. Performance measures should be set at a level that is achievable.
- c. Standards are developed to establish measurable service delivery expectations and need not describe section operations and position roles. Similar services (inbound shipments, outbound shipments, customs clearance) should be bundled in written standards. Standards are more likely to be read and used if they are brief and direct.

6 FAH-5 H-214 THROUGH H-219 UNASSIGNED

6 FAH-5 EXHIBIT H-211 ICASS STANDARD CHARTER

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES (ICASS) CHARTER FOR U.S. EMBASSY

I Purpose

- a. ICASS is a customer-driven, voluntary interagency system for managing and funding administrative support services abroad. ICASS gives posts the authority to determine how services are delivered, at what cost and by whom. ICASS has customer service standards established by post, with the service provider formally accountable to the customer. It incorporates an equitable cost distribution system through a no-year working capital fund.
- b. The ICASS charter establishes the ICASS council to promote cooperation, provide accountability, and ensure equitable distribution of administrative services and costs for participating agencies at post.

II Goals

It is the goal of the ICASS system to obtain quality services at the lowest cost; encourage use of the best and most economical service provider; provide participating agencies with more voice in the administrative decision making process; provide a transparent system of cost-sharing and reimbursement for services; and ensure user satisfaction.

III Authority

- a. The ICASS council operates under the general authority of the Economy Act of 1932, as amended (31 U.S.C. S1535), which provides for the provision of goods and services on a reimbursable basis from one agency to another and 22 U.S.C. 2695, the underlying authority for ICASS.
- b. Nothing in this charter shall be construed to supersede existing law or regulation. In executing the memorandums of understanding (MOUs) envisioned under this charter, care will be taken by the servicing agency to adhere to any special provision of law or regulation that may affect the customer agency.

- c. This handbook (6 FAH-5, ICASS Handbook) is the primary reference document for all ICASS procedures.

IV ICASS Council

- a. The ICASS council should consist of the head of each agency or designee at post which is a partner to the charter. An agency is defined generally as a permanent entity receiving a separate ICASS bill. See 6 FAH-5 H-222.3, Post ICASS Council, for more detailed requirements. No officer who is directly responsible for the provision of a service under this charter or any MOU thereunder shall be designated as a voting council member when discussing that service. Locally employed staff (LES) are not permitted to participate as members of the council. The deputy chief of mission (DCM) is a nonvoting member of the council, representing the chief of mission (COM). The service provider(s) participate in council meetings to provide expertise from the service providers' perspectives.
- b. The council shall elect one of its voting members as a chairperson on an annual basis. The chairperson retains the right to vote on all ICASS matters.
- c. The council may set up a "working group" which could be assigned such duties as drafting documents for review, studying proposals and making recommendations, and proposing meeting agendas to the full council, as determined by the council. LES may participate as members of working groups.
- d. Decisions taken by the council will generally be by consensus. For purposes of this charter, consensus is when no member of the council disagrees so strongly to the proposal under consideration that he or she poses an official objection and calls for a vote. This does not mean that each member of the council is in total agreement with every element of a proposal. Rather, it suggests that individual council members in a spirit of collegiality and cooperation are willing to move forward with a proposal that, while not ideal in every respect for their individual agency, is acceptable and beneficial for the community as a whole.
- e. In those few instances where the council is unable to achieve consensus in a timely fashion and must vote, each agency which is a party to this charter will have one vote. In such instances a two-thirds majority of those present and eligible will be sufficient to decide any matter. When voting on a particular service issue, only organizations subscribing to that service shall vote.
- f. If the council cannot reach agreement and/or any agency disagrees with a council decision, an appeal may be made to the chief of mission. If the council and/or any agency/service provider disagrees with a COM decision, then it can appeal through the ICASS service center to the

ICASS Executive Board in Washington, DC.

- g. The council will meet at least quarterly. A quorum will be 50 percent of the parties to the charter. There will be no voting by proxy, i.e., one agency representing another. However, at the discretion of the local council, written voting in absentia may be permitted.
- h. Minutes of council meetings and decisions will be recorded, published, and distributed to council members.

V Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

- a. Memorandums of understanding (MOUs) among the council (on behalf of serviced agencies) and the service providers represent the principal vehicle for implementing ICASS. Service providers may be an organization providing services directly or an agency contracting for commercially provided services. There will be a separate MOU for each service provider, whether those service providers offer one or more services. The council should adopt criteria and specific objectives for the period of the MOUs, which should include but not be limited to:
 - (1) Defining specific services which may be provided;
 - (2) A method for evaluating proposals to provide services, including price comparisons with alternate vendors where appropriate;
 - (3) Clear cost allocations or resource commitments required of customer agencies;
 - (4) Performance norms and measures, to be implemented in order to achieve post objectives; and
 - (5) A method for periodic program evaluation and review.
- b. While the council has the responsibility to facilitate the execution of MOUs, individual customer agencies should initially address concerns or questions to the provider organization. Disputes about the level, quality, or charges for services shall be addressed by the council if the provider and customer agencies cannot resolve the difficulties among themselves.

VI Agency Responsibilities

- a. As a party to this charter and any MOUs concluded hereunder, each agency pledges to provide the resources necessary to fulfill its commitments.
- b. Agencies providing services agree to give the ICASS council adequate notice of intention to withdraw any services (usually one year), and assist in an orderly transition to a new service provider. Similarly, customer agencies agree to provide six months notice of intention to withdraw from any service subscribed to under the MOU.

VII Effective Date

For each signatory (participating agency), this charter becomes effective upon its signature and its ratification by the chief of mission.

**Signatures, dates, and titles of
all agency heads and the chief of mission.**

6 FAH-5 EXHIBIT H-212

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN U.S. MISSION (POST NAME), ICASS COUNCIL, AND U.S. GOVERNMENT SERVICE PROVIDER

I Purpose

To establish the terms and conditions of an agreement between (the U.S. Government service provider: title and organization) and the serviced agencies represented by the ICASS council for the provision of services in accordance with the standards approved by the ICASS council.

II Scope

- a. ICASS services shall be available to all U.S. Government agencies or elements which sign a subscription of services form attached to this MOU (post to attach its document).
- b. This document shall be the basis for all funding commitments and transactions incidental to the services provided. Subsequent arrangements and commitments may be added as a result of periodic review provided for in section IV. Such additional arrangements and/or commitments will be documented, sequentially numbered, and signed by parties to this agreement and attached to this document as a permanent part of it.

III Effective Date and Period of Agreement

This agreement is effective upon the date of signing by the participating agencies and shall remain in effect indefinitely, subject to the availability of services and means of reimbursement, or until the result of any periodic review (see section IV) recommends termination.

IV Periodic Review

This agreement is subject to review at any time upon written request of either party (the providing agency or the ICASS council) but shall be reviewed on an annual basis to:

- (1) Determine the need for continuation, modification, or termination of the agreement;
- (2) Review performance and performance standards to evaluate the quality and timeliness of services and to make any needed changes in performance standards;
- (3) Make adjustments in any of the areas covered in the terms of this agreement which includes the means of reimbursement; and
- (4) Verify present costs and provide projected costs for the next fiscal year.

V Resource Commitments

- a. (U.S. Government service provider) agrees that sufficient staffing, property, equipment, and logistical resources are available to provide the ICASS agencies with the specified services.
- b. The U.S. mission (post name) ICASS council agrees that funds equal to the projected costs for services, reflected in the charges discussed in section IX, paragraph b, will be made available to carry out (U.S. Government service provider's) responsibilities.

VI Servicing Organization

- a. (U.S. Government service provider) will provide (description of service) to any Federal agency and/or organizational unit that participates in the U.S. mission (post name) ICASS and has signed up for such services through a subscription of services form.
- b. Any successor organization which may be established through reorganization will be responsible for carrying out this agreement.

VII Changes or Termination

- a. Changes to this agreement resulting from reviews called by ICASS service provider or council or at scheduled intervals will be documented as described in section II, paragraph b. Additional resources, required for either party as a result of change, should be obtained within 120 days after (1) this agreement is signed, or (2) changes are agreed upon. The approval authorities for (U.S. Government service provider) and the ICASS council concerning these changes shall be the following:
 - (1) Name, title and address of head or providing agency; and
 - (2) Name, title and address of the chairman of the ICASS council.
- b. This agreement may be terminated, in whole or in part, as follows:
 - (1) By (U.S. Government service provider) with one year advance

- notification for the council to arrange for another service provider;
- (2) By the ICASS council with six months advance notice to (U.S. Government service provider); or
 - (3) Should either party terminate this agreement, (U.S. Government service provider) will assist the ICASS council in the orderly transfer of services to an ICASS designated facility.
- c. A withdrawal is effective either October 1 or April 1 provided six months notice was given to the ICASS council. Additional severance/separation costs will be handled in accordance with this handbook.

VIII Staff Coordination

- a. The individuals responsible for the administration and coordination of the terms of this agreement within and for their respective organization should be those identified in section VII, paragraph a. Copies of this document, pertinent correspondence, and changes or other transactions pertaining to this agreement shall be furnished to each of those individuals.
- b. Responsible individuals identified in section VII, paragraph a, may redelegate the functions of administration and coordination of this agreement. Those functions redelegated to (U.S. Government service provider) officer shall become part of that officer's performance evaluation by the ICASS council. Performance should be measured against the standards listed in this agreement (post to attach standards).

IX Allocation and Cost Agreements

Costs should be calculated, established, and distributed from the authorized cost distribution system as described in this handbook.

X Terms

(U.S. Government service provider) agrees to provide ICASS members with the same quality and quantity of services that are provided to its own organization using established procedures. However, (U.S. Government service provider) must be able to provide the specified services in accordance with the rules and regulations of the participating agencies.

XI Authority

The authority for entering into this agreement is 22 U.S.C. 2695 or the Economy Act of 1932, 31 U.S.C. 1535, as amended, and the ICASS charter, signed by the chief of mission and agreed to by all agencies at post on (date of the charter).

XII Subscription of Services

- a. Subscriptions of services are the key building blocks of the MOUs.
- b. Posts should attach a subscription of services statement to the MOU.
These statements reflect the services offered and the subscribers for each offered service.

NOTE: Sign up of subscription of services does not constitute budget approval.

6 FAH-5 EXHIBIT H-212.1 SUBSCRIPTION OF SERVICES

(CT:ICASS-5; 07-21-2006)

SAMPLE SUBSCRIPTION OF SERVICE

(Format Not Mandatory)

POST: Accra

SERVICE/COST CENTER: GSO/Customs and Shipping

SERVICE PROVIDER: U.S. Embassy Administrative Section (STATE)

PERIOD COVERED: October 1, xxxx To September 30, xxxx

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE/PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: Attached

SUBSCRIBING AGENCIES:

USAID: _____
Barry Helpful
Exec. Officer

PEACE CORPS: _____
Tim Traveler
Director

COMMERCE: _____
Penelope Moneypenny
SCO

DAO: _____
SGT A. Smith
Admin Asst.

SERVICE PROVIDER:

ADM: _____
Bernard B. Jones
Management Counselor
U.S. Embassy

Attachment:

SUBSCRIPTION OF SERVICE
(Format Not Mandatory)

Service Standards and Performance Measures

SERVICE/COST CENTER: GSO/CUSTOMS and SHIPPING

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	STANDARD AND MEASURES
1. Packing, crating, and forwarding of HHE, UAB, and POV shipments	Action will be initiated within 3 working days after receipt of a written request for shipment/customs service
2. Preparing documents necessary for customs clearances	For all valid clearances, within 2 working days after receipt of (ARO) shipping documentation
3. Request of diplomatic/official license plates for GOVs/POVs	For valid entitlements, within 5 working days after customs clearance
4. Request of official drivers' licenses	Within 2 working days of ARO required documents from employee